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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, listings, of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (canceled)

Claim 2 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 ~~44~~ wherein the manager component is a session bean object and a single point-of-entry to the product information.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 ~~44~~ wherein the product specification is defined by metadata.

Claim 4 (original): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 3 wherein the product specification metadata conform to an XML schema.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 ~~44~~ wherein the product information is persisted by the use of an entity bean.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 ~~44~~ wherein the product information is grouped into parameters and accessories.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 ~~44~~ wherein the product parameters define a set of basic characteristics for a product.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 ~~44~~ wherein the product accessories define a set of optional characteristics for a product.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 ~~44~~ wherein the product parameters are defined as XML elements having a plurality of attributes.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for

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managing and performing searches of claim ~~1~~ 44 wherein the product accessories are defined as XML elements having a plurality of attributes.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim ~~1~~ 44 wherein the search configuration component defines a search configuration for each type of product.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim ~~1~~ 44 wherein the search configurations are generated dynamically.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim ~~1~~ 44 wherein the set of search rules define a set of product search behavior.

Claim 14 (canceled)

Claim 15 (currently amended): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim ~~1~~ 44 further comprising an interface for accessing the manager component to initiate a product search.

Claim 16 (original): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 15 wherein the interface is a Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) interface.

Claim 17 (original): The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 15 wherein the interface is a remote interface integrated with the J2EE application.

Claim 18 (canceled)

Claim 19 (canceled)

Claim 20 (currently amended): The method for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~18~~ 45 further comprising the act of persisting the product information using entity beans.

Claim 21 (currently amended): The method for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~18~~ 45 further comprising the act of defining the product specification by metadata.

Claim 22 (original): The method for managing and performing searches on

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configurable products of claim 21 wherein the product specification metadata conforms to an XML schema.

Claim 23 (currently amended): The method for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~18~~ 45 further comprising the act of persisting product information by using entity beans.

Claim 24 (currently amended): The method for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~18~~ 45 further comprising the act of grouping product information into a plurality of parameters and a plurality of accessories.

Claim 25 (currently amended): The method for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~18~~ 45 wherein the plurality of parameters define a set of basic characteristics for a product.

Claim 26 (currently amended): The method for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~18~~ 45 wherein the plurality of accessories define a set of optional characteristics for a product.

Claim 27 (currently amended): The method for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~18~~ 45 further comprising the act of defining product parameters as XML elements having a plurality of attributes.

Claim 28 (currently amended): The method for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~18~~ 45 further comprising the act of defining product accessories as XML elements having a plurality of attributes.

Claim 29 (currently amended): The method for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~18~~ 45 further comprising the step of defining a search configuration for each type of product.

Claim 30 (canceled)

Claim 31 (currently amended): The method for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~18~~ 45 further comprising the step of providing an interface for accessing the manager component to initiate a product search.

Claim 32 (canceled)

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Claim 33 (currently amended): The computer program product for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~32~~ 46 further comprising program instructions recorded on the recording medium for constructing a set of search rules to use in searching the plurality of product information.

Claim 34 (currently amended): The computer program product for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~32~~ 46 further comprising program instructions recorded on the recording medium for persisting the product specification using entity beans.

Claim 35 (currently amended): The computer program product for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~32~~ 46 further comprising program instructions recorded on the recording medium for defining the product specification by metadata.

Claim 36 (original): The computer program product for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim 35 wherein the product specification metadata conforms to an XML schema.

Claim 37 (currently amended): The computer program product for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~32~~ 46 further comprising program instructions recorded on the recording medium for persisting product information by using session beans.

Claim 38 (currently amended): The computer program product for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~32~~ 46 further comprising program instructions recorded on the recording medium for grouping product information into a plurality of parameters and a plurality of accessories.

Claim 39 (currently amended): The computer program product for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~32~~ 46 further comprising program instructions recorded on the recording medium for defining product parameters as XML elements having a plurality of attributes.

Claim 40 (currently amended): The computer program product for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~32~~ 46 further comprising program instructions recorded on the recording medium for defining product

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accessories as XML elements having a plurality of attributes.

Claim 41 (canceled)

Claim 42 (canceled)

Claim 43 (currently amended): The computer program product for managing and performing searches on configurable products of claim ~~32~~ 46 further comprising program instructions recorded on the recording medium for providing an interface for accessing the manager component to initiate a product search.

Claim 44 (new): A generic product finder system for managing and performing searches on configurable products in a J2EE application comprising:

- a manager component for performing searches in response to a search query;

- a product component for persisting a plurality of product information and interacting with the manger component in conducting searches of the product information;

- a product metadata component that interacts with the manager component for defining a product specification; and

- a search configuration component that interacts with the manager component for constructing a set of search rules in a product search configuration, wherein the set of search rules include weight values to apply to product information for ordering of partial matches in determining products to identify as a result of the search performed.

Claim 45 (new): A method for managing and performing searches on configurable products in a J2EE application, comprising the steps of:

- creating a manager component that conducts searches in a response to a search query;

- generating a product metadata component that interacts with the product manager component to define a product specification;

- persisting a plurality of product information that interacts with the manager component in conducting searches of the product information;

- generating a search configuration component that interacts with the manager component in conducting searches for product information that matches a criterion in the search query;

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constructing a set of search rules to use in searching the plurality of product information; and

applying weight values to product information to order partial matches in determining products to identify as a result of the search performed.

Claim 46 (new): A computer program product for managing and performing searches on configurable products, the computer program product comprising:

a recording medium;

program instructions recorded on the recording medium for conducting searches in response to a search query;

program instructions recorded on the recording medium for defining a product specification;

program instructions recorded on the recording medium for persisting a plurality of product information and interacting with the program instructions for conducting searches for use in conducting searches of the product information for matching products;

program instructions recorded on the recording medium for generating a search configuration and interactive with the program instructions for conducting searches for product information that match a criterion in the search query;

program instructions recorded on the recording medium for defining a search configuration for each type of product; and

program instructions recorded on the recording medium for applying weight values to product information to order partial matches in determining products to identify as a result of the search performed.